

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0232

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION

REF: A. MOSCOW 18685 B. MOSCOW 18931

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET JEWISH ACTIVIST SOURCES CONTINUE TO SEE LITTLE CHANGE IN EMIGRATION AREA SINCE JACKSON-KISSINGER EXCHANGE OF LETTERS AND LATER PUBLICATION OF SOVIET POSITION ON TRADE AND EMIGRATION. THEY NOTE RECENT FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE DEVELOPMENTS BUT THEY, AS WE, DO NOT YET SEE A PATTERN EMERGING. END SUMMARY.

2. IN PAST WEEK EMBOFF HAS HAD SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH TWO MOSCOW JEWISH ACTIVISTS AND LONGTIME "REFUSENIKS" WHO KEEP CLOSE TRACK OF EMIGRATION DEVELOPMENTS. ALTHOUGH SOURCES HAVE SELF-INTERESTED VIEWPOINTS, THEY HAVE PROVIDED OBJECTIVE INFORMATION ON EMIGRATION QUESTION IN THE PAST.

3. SOURCES SEE LITTLE CHANGE IN HANDLING OF EMIGRATION APPLICATIONS BY AUTHORITIES. EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE "BUSINESS AS USUAL," WITH NEITHER WORSENING NOR IMPROVEMENT IN NORMAL PROCEDURES. ASKED TO COMMENT ON SIGNIFICANCE OF EXIT OF WELL-KNOWN ACTIVISTS ALEKSANDR VORONEL AND VIKTOR POLSKIY, AT END OF DECEMBER, SOURCES FELT THAT CASES WERE IMPORTANT, BUT THAT THEY SET NO PRECEDENT. THEIR IMPRESSION IS THAT AUTHORITIES HAVE SOME SORT OF SCHEDULE FOR RELEASE OF LEADING ACTIVISTS AND WILL EVENTUALLY LET MOST OF THEM GO, BUT NOT TOO QUICKLY, AND CERTAINLY NOT ALL

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AT ONCE. ACTIVISTS BELIEVE THAT SOVIETS SEE NO ADVANTAGE IN

HOLDING DISSATISFIED GROUP FOREVER, BUT FEW HAVE BEEN GIVEN ANY INDICATION OF WHEN THEY MIGHT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE. RECENT NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AREA IS THAT SEVERAL APPLICANTS (MAINLY SCIENTISTS) WHO WERE REFUSED EXIT PERMISSION WERE TOLD BY VISA AUTHORITIES THAT THEY COULD NOT LEAVE BEFORE SPECIFIC DATES; TWO WERE TOLD NOT BEFORE 1980. ANOTHER WAS REPORTEDLY TOLD TO COME BACK IN A YEAR. SOURCES DID NOT KNOW IF THIS SHOWED GREATER WILLINGNESS ON PART OF AUTHORITIES TO PROVIDE MORE EXACT INFORMATION TO NEW APPLICANTS WHO ARE REFUSED EXIT PERMISSION, BUT SAID LENGTHS OF TIME INVOLVED COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED GOOD SIGN.

4. ON MORE FAVORABLE SIDE, ONE SOURCE NOTED THAT TWO "REFUSENIKS" HAVE RECENTLY HAD THEIR TELEPHONES REINSTALLED. (ALMOST ALL ACTIVISTS HAVE HAD TELEPHONES REMOVED FROM THEIR APARTMENTS IN LAST YEAR.) ONE OF THESE IS ACADEMICIAN V.G. LEVICH, MOST PROMINENT JEWISH PROFESSOR AMONG "REFUSENIKS." SOURCE TERMED THIS AS TYPICAL OF SOVIET "CARROT AND STICK" APPROACH, SINCE LEVICH WAS RECENTLY TOLD, CONTRARY TO EARLIER PROMISES, THAT ONLY HIS SONS, NOT WHOLE FAMILY, COULD EMIGRATE EARLY THIS YEAR (REF B). SOURCE ALSO NOTED THAT LEVICH IS ON THE OUTS WITH MOST OF JEWISH ACTIVIST COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF HIS PASSIVITY AFTER HE WAS GIVEN WORD LAST JUNE THAT HE COULD EMIGRATE IN 1975.

5. SOURCE CALLED RECENT CONVICTION FOR BRIBE-TAKING OF DR. SHTERN IN UKRAINIAN CITY OF VINNITSA (REF A) AS "CLEAR ANTI-SEMITIC" ACTION, NOTING THAT SHTERN DID ONLY WHAT 75 PERCENT OF GOOD SOVIET DOCTORS DO, I.E., ACCEPT PRIVATE CASES AFTER REGULAR OFFICE HOURS. SHTERN RECEIVED SENTENCE OF EIGHT YEARS AND CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY, WHICH IS MINIMUM UNDER UKRAINIAN CRIMINAL CODE FOR "PERSONS IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY" WHO ACCEPT BRIBES. (SHTERN WAS HEAD OF A LOCAL CLINIC). SOURCE DID NOT KNOW ARTICLE OF UKRAINIAN CODE UNDER WHICH SHTERN SENTENCED BUT SAID IT WAS COMPARABLE TO ARTICLE 173 OF RSFSR CODE. SOURCE SAID SHTERN'S LAWYER PLANS TO APPEAL CASE, BUT THAT ONLY HOPE FOR REDUCTION OF SENTENCE IS TO HAVE CHARGES SHIFTED TO DIFFERENT ARTICLE OF CODE, PERHAPS UNDER "ILLEGAL BUSINESS" PROVISIONS. JEWISH ACTIVISTS WILL ATTEMPT TO KEEP CASE ALIVE IN WESTERN PRESS AS EXAMPLE OF SOVIET HARASSMENT OF JEWS AND "OFFICIAL ANTI-SEMITISM".

6. COMMENT: ALONG WITH ACTIVIST SOURCES, WE CAN AS YET SEE NO CONFIDENTIAL

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PATTERN EMERGING FROM CONFUSING AND OFTEN CONTRADICTORY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EMIGRATION FIELD.  
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